

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for considering the references submitted with the Information Disclosure Statements filed on September 29, 2003 and May 17, 2006.

Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to acknowledge the foreign priority documents submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d) on September 29, 2003.

New claim 25 is added, hence, claims 1-25 are all the claims pending in the application. Claim 25 is supported in the specification at least at page 9, lines 14-20, and page 30, lines 2-12.

I. Claim Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 19, 23, and 24 have been amended to improve clarity and better conform them to U.S. patent practice.

II. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 101

The Examiner contends claims 23 and 24 are directed to non-statutory subject matter and have therefore been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101. Applicants note that claims 23 and 24 have been amended and respectfully submit to the Examiner to withdraw the rejections based on 35 U.S.C. §101.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6, 865, 386 to Aoyama et al ("Aoyama")

Claims 1-24 have been examined. Claims 1-3, 5, 8, 10, 12-14, 16, 19, 21, 23, and 24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) over Aoyama. For at least the following reasons, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections.

A. Claim 1

Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Aoyama. For example, claim 1 states that the character being displayed and controlled by the character presentation means upon occurrence of an event based on said event's history information, where the character is not previously identified or stored to be related to the said occurring event. The Examiner contends that in figure 1 and column 5, lines 41-67 of Aoyama, the display of an image (character) or sequence of images (characters) by the control unit 4 discloses or suggests the controlled animation display of a character upon the occurrence of an event by the character presentation means based on the history information of the event as stated in claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that Aoyama does not disclose all the limitations of the claims in as complete detail as set forth in the claims.

For instance, the control unit 4 of Aoyama does not disclose the character presentation means of the present invention. Specifically, the control unit 4 of Aoyama displays a character or a sequence of characters when an event occurs in relation to a communications partner, based on previous input by a user that identifies/stores said image as being related to said communications partner (Aoyama, column 5, lines 46-61). Since the image being displayed upon the occurrence of an event in Aoyama is preset by a user based on the communications partner related to the event, whereas in the present invention, there is no relation between the image (character) and an event prior to the occurrence of the event, the control unit 4 of Aoyama does not disclose, teach, or suggest the character presentation means of the present invention. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit to the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(c).

B. Claims 2, 3 and 5

Claims 2, 3 and 5 are dependent upon claim 1, which has been shown above to be patentable over Aoyama. Therefore, claims 2, 3 and 5 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 1. Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections of claims 2, 3 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

C. Claim 8

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 is patentable over the cited reference of Aoyama. For example, claim 8 states that the character presentation means controls animation display of a character upon the occurrence of an event depending on the timing of occurrence of a predetermined operation associated with the event. The Examiner contends that in figure 1 and column 5, lines 41-67 of Aoyama, the display of an image or sequence of images controlled by the control unit 4 discloses or suggests the features recited in claim 8. Applicants respectfully submit that the Examiner is again misinterpreting the teachings of Aoyama.

For instance, the display of an image or sequence of images by the control unit 4 in Aoyama is not based on the timing of a predetermined operation. The control unit 4 of Aoyama displays an image or sequence of images based on personal data of a communications partner (including an image related to the communications partner) that was previously stored by a user in memory 6 (Aoyama, column 5, lines 43-53). There is no mention in Aoyama that the display of the image or sequence of images is based on the timing of a predetermined operation as stated in claim 8. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 8 contains patentable subject matter and is in condition for allowance.

D. Claim 10

Claim 10 is dependent upon claim 8, which has been shown above to be patentable over Aoyama. Therefore, claim 10 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency on claim 8.

E. Claim 12

Claim 12 recites features analogous to claim 1 which has been shown above to contain patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit claim 12 is patentable for at least reasons analogous to those given above with respect to claim 1.

F. Claims 13, 14 and 16

Claims 13, 14 and 16 are dependent upon claim 12, which has been shown above to be patentable over Aoyama. Therefore, claims 13, 14 and 16 are patentable at least by virtue of their dependency on claim 12.

G. Claim 19

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 19 is patentable over the cited reference of Aoyama. Claim 19 recites features similar to those present in claim 8 with respect to the character presentation means controlling animation display of a character based on the timing of a predetermined operation. Applicant submits to the Examiner that claim 19 is patentable for at least reasons analogous to those given above with respect to claim 8.

H. Claim 21

Claim 21 is dependent upon claim 19, which has been shown above to be patentable over Aoyama. Therefore, claim 21 is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency on claim 19.

I. Claim 23

Claim 23 recites features analogous to claim 1 which has been shown above to contain patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit claim 23 is patentable for at least reasons analogous to those given above with respect to claim 1.

J. Claim 24

Claim 24 recites features analogous to claim 8 which has been shown above to contain patentable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit claim 24 is patentable for at least reasons analogous to those given above with respect to claim 8.

IV. Conclusion

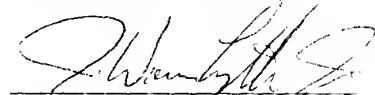
In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
Application No. 10/671,547

Docket No. Q77532

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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